State funding of elections

2715. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have proposed to introduce state funding of elections;

(b) whether Government have constituted any Expert Committee/Study Group etc. to examine the matter;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time frame within which the proposal would be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The process of reforms/changes of electoral laws and other related matters is a continuous and ongoing process and can be carried out only through consensus among political parties. Since it is a long drawn process, it is not possible to indicate any time frame.

Prisoners in jails

2716. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have studied the recent statistics put out by the International Centre for Prison Studies (ICPS) listing US at the top with 2,079 million of its people in prison in 2004;

(b) whether as compared to US, China and India ranked second and third with 15,49,000 and 3,14,000 prisoners in jails, respectively, during the year 2004; and

(c) if so, whether this is indicative of very low conviction rate prevailing in the country, leaving criminals to roam about freely aggravating the law and order situation?